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Notes on the Neotropical Population of *Hemidactylus frenatus* Schlegel

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Probably the first report of the Asiatic gecko, *Hemidactylus frenatus* Schlegel, from neotropical areas is that of Burt and Myers (1942, p. 13-14). This record is based on four adult and two juvenile specimens taken by J. L. Hawken at Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico on December 1, 1939. The two young were tentatively assigned to the series by Burt and Myers despite the fact that they were not listed in Hawken's field catalogue. These specimens are now numbers 9472-9477 in the Stanford University Museum. Grant and Deuel (1944, p. 135) quote from a letter from Dr. Hobart M. Smith noting the presence of *frenatus* on the Pacific coast of Mexico, and Loveridge (1947, p. 129) includes Mexico in the range of the species. To date no literature report indicates the fact that *frenatus* is apparently well established as a member of the Mexican fauna.

While at Acapulco on December 26 and 27, 1946, I captured twenty specimens of *frenatus* on the walls of the Hotel Casablanca, where they were apparently feeding on insects attracted to the lights of the building. These individuals are now numbers 482-501 in my collection. Many additional specimens were seen at the hotel and at night the characteristic squeaking sounds of the lizards could be heard in the city.

That *frenatus* is now established as a member of the American fauna cannot be doubted. Among the twenty specimens are five small individuals which may represent young-of-the-year. In snout-vent length the series varies from 20.6 to 55.2 mm. Although speculations based upon samples as small as this are of limited value, the following frequency distribution of snout-vent measurements is of some interest.

Size class	Frequency	Size class	Frequency
20.6-25.6	1	40.6-45.6	7
25.6-30.6	3	45.6-50.6	5
30.6 - 35.6	1	50.6 - 55.6	2
35.6 - 40.6	1		

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This apparent bimodality would seem to indicate two age classes: juveniles (possibly young-of-the-year) and adults, implying that adult proportions may be reached in the second season of life. Loveridge (*loc. cit.*, p. 129) reports finding young and probably eggs of this species on Lamu Island on May 10-14, 1934, and Sights (1949, p. 81) reports eggs near Kharagpur, Western Bengal on August 5. What the breeding season of the Mexican population may be is still problematical. In general my specimens seem to be smaller than previously recorded measurements. Loveridge (*loc. cit.*) reports two specimens with snout-vent measurements of 55 mm., and Smith (1935, p. 96) reports a specimen 60 mm. in length. It may be implied from Loveridge's statements that maximum size is indicated.

The postmentals of this series show essentially the variation described by Schmidt (1927, p. 412). One specimen (RAE 494) shows three pairs of scales; numbers 493 and 501 show counts of 3/2 and 2/3 respectively; the second postmental on the left of 501 is partially divided into two scales, but the suture is incomplete. The remainder all have the typical two pairs of postmentals, but certain of these specimens show the most anterior of the sublabial scales much enlarged.

Most of these twenty specimens had the subdigital scansors infested by tiny red mites; however, these mites have not been identified to determine whether they are neotropical or Asiatic endemics.

Hemidactylus frenatus is an animal remarkable for its wandering abilities. It is probably endemic only in the Oriental Region, but dispersal by human agency has now apparently established scattered colonies throughout west Africa, Madagascar, the Seychelles Islands, Mauritius, and St. Helena, tropical Australia and New Guinea, and at Acapulco, Mexico. Daugherty (*in* Burt and Myers) has presented an excellent argument to show that the species may have been introduced into Mexico from the Philippines on the Manila Galleons which crossed the Pacific yearly from 1565 to 1815. However it managed to cross from the old world, it is certainly now a member of the neotropical fauna.

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